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GRUNDER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/18/2018  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [NS](#)  
SUBJECT: DEMARCHE DELIVERED: PASSAGE OF THE RESOLUTION ON  
HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN

REF: SECSTATE 118278

Classified By: Political-Economic Chief Geneve Menscher for reasons 1.4  
(B) and (D)

11. (C) PolEcon Chief met with Chantal Elsenhout, acting Head of the International Organizations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Suriname (GOS) to deliver points in Reftel. Elsenhout said she was not in a position now to divulge how Suriname will vote this year as the matter is still being "considered." She did confirm that in regards to its Third Committee voting, Suriname will be making decisions on a case-by-case basis and not by a group bloc vote.

12. (C) When PolEcon Chief pointed out that last year Suriname abstained from the "no action" vote on Burma, and asked if the same action could be expected again, Elsenhout reiterated she was not at liberty to say yet and that the decision was under discussion at a "higher level" in the GOS. She said that the GOS would prefer that the United Nations Human Rights Council have the opportunity to handle human rights issues, rather than passing resolutions in the Third Committee. She then stated, however, that in 2007 the GOS determined the human rights situation in Burma had passed a certain threshold, which led Suriname to abstain from the "no action" vote. Whether the GOS would determine that the situation in Burma in 2008 also met this threshold remains to be seen. Elsenhout gave the definite impression that she was not the decision-maker and that she, too, was waiting for instruction. (Note: Suriname's Ambassador to the United Nations, Henry MacDonald, was a human rights lawyer by profession, which may have influenced the GOS 2007 decision on Burma. End Note).

13. (U) Post will report further substantive reaction from the GOS.  
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